

**Committee for a Better Environment
Davis Hall, College Park
September 28, 2015
7:00 PM**

<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Suchitra Balachandran	X	
Matt Dernoga	X	
Karen Garvin		X
Susan Keller	X	
Janis Oppelt	X	
Kennis Termini	X	
Donna Weene	X	

Guests Present: Councilmember Alan Hew; Steve Beavers, City Liaison; Sheryl DeWalt,
Contract Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm by Ms. Oppelt.

1. Review and approval 7/27/15 meeting minutes

Ms. Weene made a motion to approve the draft minutes from the July 27, 2015 meeting with the corrections stated. Ms. Termini seconded the motion. All in favor; no opposed.

2. Budget

An expenditure of \$54 was reimbursed to Ms. Weene for plants for the College Park Woods pool planting. The bench, requested by Ms. Termini, at 53rd Avenue and 52nd place was installed and Mr. Beavers provided a picture of the bench.

3. Ongoing Business

- a. Green Awards.** The Green Awards were not handed out on College Park Day. There were emails back and forth as well as discussion at the meeting on how to handle the Green Awards. There appear to be too many categories and not specific enough criteria. The Committee would like to create different criteria for the award and narrow down the categories. Ms. Oppelt suggested that the Awards should be given out on Earth Day, not College Park Day. Councilmember Hew suggested that the award winners could also be announced at College Park Day. The final suggestion on the Awards is that the criteria will be re-done by the end of January 2016. The committee will review and vote on the new criteria and it

will be publicized for nominations and Awards will be given at a Council Meeting near Earth Day (April 222016).

- b. **Permaculture.** Ms. Oppelt and Ms. Gemma Evans will be weeding on Tuesday, September 29. All are welcome to join.
- c. **Community Garden.** There are currently 20 garden plots and all 20 have been rented.
- d. **Quiet Lawns initiative.** Since Ms. Garvin was absent from this meeting, the Noise Control Committee continued discussion was tabled and will be re-visited in the October meeting.
- e. The movie “Inhabit” is tentatively scheduled for showing on November 14 at City Hall Council Chambers. Ms. Oppelt will confirm the date and inform the committee.
- f. The Infused vinegars and oils workshop has been cancelled.
- g. **Fencing.** Mr. Dernoga researched information on the College Park City ordinance as well as other surrounding communities regarding fences and specifically front yard fences. The College Park ordinance, which is a Prince Georges County ordinance enforced by College Park, states that you cannot have front yard fences, but it does state that you can fence in a garden. The question remains on gardening in your front yard and what to do about it. The committee strongly wants to encourage all forms of gardening. Mr. Dernoga suggested that modification be made in the City Code and presented to APC who could then present the modification to City Council. Ms. Oppelt stated that she believes the next APC public hearing is on December 3, but she will confirm the date and email the committee. In the interim, Mr. Dernoga will work on verbiage and circulate to the committee. The committee will review the verbiage at the October meeting.

4. **New Business**

- a. Tabled discussion on creating a Facebook page/social media page.
- b. Sustainable Maryland would like to come and talk about the program at the October meeting. Mr. Beavers will make the arrangements. Ms. Oppelt will send out the current criteria to the committee on Sustainable Maryland.
- c. Discussed having a compost workshop in early spring, i.e., March. There are several people certified as compost experts that will be contacted about the workshop.
- d. Ms. Termini and Ms. Weene would like to conduct an activity for the elementary school children on October 31 at the Hollywood Farmer’s Market on making pine cone bird feeders. Ms. Termini made a motion for a maximum of \$75 for supplies. Mr. Dernoga seconded the motion. Ms. Oppelt, Ms. Weene, and Ms. Balachandran voted aye on the motion. Ms. Keller voted nay. Motion was passed.
- e. FYI – College Park no longer accepts plastic bags for recycling. They should be taken to a grocery store.
- f. Branchville Fire Department took Cruz Development to court over construction of an apartment on a wooded area of Indian Creek which is a wetlands. Cruz wants to bypass the County and keep the lawsuit in federal court. It appears that the lawsuit will continue in Prince Georges County Court.

5. **Next meeting date**

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Monday, October 19, 2015 at 7:00pm.

A motion was made by Ms. Weene to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Ms. Oppelt. The meeting was adjourned at 8:28pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Sheryl DeWalt, Contract Secretary